

## Two Questions about F. Scott Fitzgerald and “Trimalchio”

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## Two Questions about F. Scott Fitzgerald and “Trimalchio”\*

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### 1. Introduction

Although it is unclear when F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) would have first heard of “The Banquet of Trimalchio,” a section of Petronius’ *Satyricon*, and even less clear when he may have read it,<sup>1</sup> he evidently had Trimalchio in mind while writing *The Great Gatsby* (henceforth *Gatsby*), as Brian Way has pointed out (“*Gatsby*” 106). Indeed, Fitzgerald and Jay Gatsby are often discussed with reference to “Trimalchio” and such discussions appear to arise as a result of three factors. First, one possible title for the book that was eventually entitled *The Great Gatsby* was *Trimalchio*.<sup>2</sup> Second, Jay Gatsby is compared to a man called Trimalchio at one point in Fitzgerald’s narrative. Third, the galley proofs of *Gatsby* are called *Trimalchio*. I would have liked to discuss all the problems surrounding the relation between Fitzgerald and “Trimalchio,” but owing to word count limitations, this paper will focus on two questions in particular. First, to what extent does Jay Gatsby resemble the nouveau riche of “The Banquet of Trimalchio”? Second, to what extent do the revisions made to Fitzgerald’s *Trimalchio* influence *The Great Gatsby*?

“The Banquet of Trimalchio” of the *Satyricon* immediately comes to mind when discussing the character of Jay Gatsby. Many papers have already made this comparison, highlighting differences between *Gatsby* and “Trimalchio”; however, an overall evaluation seems to be lacking. Therefore, this paper scrutinizes the previous studies, exploring the differences and similarities between the two texts and examining the influence of “Trimalchio” on Fitzgerald.

The galley proof of *Gatsby* is usually referred to as *Trimalchio*. One of the reasons why *Gatsby* has achieved such a high degree of perfection is because of the author’s continual revision and polishing of the prototypes. Many scholars have compared *Gatsby* and the *Ur-Gatsby*; however, the problem seems to lie in the fact that previous comparative studies have simply identified the differences between *Gatsby* and *Ur-Gatsby*, or con-

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\* Part of this paper is based on my paper in Japanese, “Kakikae-rare-ta-Daisy-to-Gatsby” [“Revised Daisy and Gatsby”].

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sidered the process of revisions made for publication. This paper not only compares *Gatsby* with its galleys—in this case, *Trimalchio*, one of the prototypes—but also shows how the revision influenced the characters and how the revised characters enhance the value of the work, thus revealing what ultimately makes *The Great Gatsby* great.

## 2. *The Great Gatsby* and “The Banquet of Trimalchio”

It should first be noted that Jay Gatsby reflects the role of the nouveau riche in “Trimalchio.” The term itself is used once at the beginning of Chapter 7 of *Gatsby*.

It was when curiosity about Gatsby was at its highest that the lights in his house failed to go on one Saturday night—and, as obscurely as it had begun, his career as Trimalchio was over. (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 88; henceforth *GG*)

Nick Carraway compares Gatsby’s career to that of a man called Trimalchio, a member of the nouveau riche who appears in a section entitled “The Banquet of Trimalchio” in the *Satyricon*.

Trimalchio resembles Jay Gatsby in many respects. He is a freedman who, after becoming rich, holds unique banquets. He makes the following announcement to his guests: “I too was once in the same boat as you, but thanks to my own merits I’ve reached where I am” (Petronius 64). He also later confesses, “Believe me, if you’ve only a ha’penny, you’re ranked at a ha’penny; but if you have something behind you, you’ll be thought to be someone. So that’s the story of yours truly—once a frog, but now a king” (66). Trimalchio rises up the ranks to become a millionaire in his own right, and believes in the absolute value of money. A similar rags-to-riches tale can be seen in the character of Jay Gatsby: the young man who “drift[ed] coolly out of nowhere” (*GG* 41) is a son of “shiftless and unsuccessful farm people” (*GG* 76), who goes on to become the owner of “a palace on Long Island Sound” (*GG* 41).<sup>3</sup>

Many scholars have previously shown an interest in these two “parvenus.” The first influential paper comparing the two characters is Paul L. MacKendrick’s “*The Great Gatsby* and Trimalchio.” Published in 1950, a quarter of a century after the publication of *Gatsby*, this work has been quoted in subsequent papers. MacKendrick states that “[t]hese nabobs, ancient and modern, have in common not only their music and their objets d’art, but their parasites, the types that prey upon them” (309). He also claims that “[Petronius’] colossally ignorant and ostentatious Trimalchio, confused and unhappy in the midst of his luxury, is described with the same repugnance which Fitzgerald lavishes upon Tom Buchanan” (314). MacKendrick details the similarities between Trimalchio and Tom, as well as the similarities between Trimalchio and Jay Gatsby.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.1. Two Similarities

Comparative studies of both works have been made since MacKendrick's analysis. For example, William Ryland Drennan claims:

[H]is connection [with Trimalchio] is apparent from the novel's working title (Trimalchio in West Egg or, more simply, Trimalchio) and by the fact that there exist striking parallels between the two works' respective parvenus: like Gatsby, Trimalchio has amassed great wealth, throws sybaritic parties for swarms of dissolute guests (who secretly mock him), and carries with him the boorish manners of his servile past into a new and glittering milieu. (146)

*Gatsby*, whose working title was at one point "Trimalchio," shares many elements with "Trimalchio." Both Gatsby and Trimalchio are "parvenus" whose taste is ostentatious and "boorish," and both hold "sybaritic" parties with "dissolute" guests.

The two men share two key characteristics. First, they are vulgar. Brian Way notes that "[b]oth are set in times of wealth and decadence. . . . The guests in each case are a motley collection of adventurers and entertainers, while the two hosts are nouveaux riches with the uncertain taste common to that position" (105). Since they are common "nouveaux riches," their parties have an "uncertain taste"; that is to say, they are not sophisticated.

Second, at these parties, the guests do not respect their respective hosts. James W. Tuttleton gives the following assessment of Gatsby:

Like Trimalchio, Gatsby appears from nowhere, squanders his wealth in staging one stupendous party after another, serves up mountains of food and drink, and is the object of ridicule among his guests, none of whom know him. (172-73)

Although both hosts offer extensive hospitality, they are nonetheless a source of "ridicule" among their guests. Furthermore, H. D. Rankin claims that "Gatsby does share Trimalchio's vulgarity and like Trimalchio he dispenses hospitality to his indifferent guests" (82). In both cases, the guests are "indifferent" to their host and, naturally, they do not respect them.<sup>5</sup>

In comparing both works, many critics have focused on the parties and their guests as well as on the hosts themselves. Previous studies indicate that both Trimalchio and Gatsby are social climbers, whose tastes are unsophisticated, and whose parties are crude and vulgar, despite their gorgeous aesthetic. Even though the hosts entertain their guests graciously, they cannot earn their respect.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.2. Three Differences

There are three main differences between Jay Gatsby and Trimalchio. The first of these is the difference in their respective personalities. Gatsby does not touch a drop of alcohol (*GG* 41), has little interest in women—except Daisy—and is so romantic that Nick is attracted to him and starts to write about him in his memoirs. Trimalchio, in contrast to Gatsby, is an amorous, heavy drinker, who is not at all attractive.

The second difference can be seen in each character's reason for hosting parties. Both hold parties in order to display their wealth (Froehlich 213), but the true purpose behind each party is different. Trimalchio throws luxurious parties and entertains his guests so as to raise his own social status (D'Arms 308-20; Donahue 69-74). On the contrary, Gatsby does not intend to heighten his status, but rather sees the party as a device for enticing Daisy. Although he is the host, he does not necessarily enjoy his own party. In contrast to "the fraternal hilarity" (*GG* 41) going on around him, Gatsby does not drink or communicate with his guests, "standing alone on the marble steps and looking from one group to another with approving eyes" (*GG* 41). Nick describes Gatsby's behavior at the party thus: "[a] sudden emptiness seemed to flow now from the windows and the great doors, endowing with complete isolation the figure of the host who stood on the porch, his hand up in a formal gesture of farewell" (*GG* 46). The narrator goes on to add that "he had stood on those steps, concealing his incorruptible dream, as he waved them goodbye" (*GG* 120). Gatsby seems to be isolated, not fitting in with the atmosphere of his own party.

The third difference is the way in which each author portrays his character. Ward Briggs argues that "[t]he two characters differ in that Fitzgerald has made his protagonist a figure of romantic aspiration and tragedy, while Petronius only laughs at the cartoonish Trimalchio, who is, after all, merely one of the characters the heroes meet on their adventure" ("Petronius and Virgil" 230). According to each author's intentions, Gatsby is a suitable hero, while Trimalchio is nothing more than a secondary character.

One must ask, then, to what extent was Fitzgerald influenced by the *Satyricon*? Trimalchio and Gatsby are both more concerned with money than taste, and believe that an extravagant banquet can help them to realize their dreams. Furthermore, Fitzgerald read the classics, and indeed used the term itself in *Gatsby* in relation to his protagonist. In addition, it is significant that the name Nick Carraway also originates from Petronius' work (Drennan 145-46). Yet, as W. M. Frohock states (61), the two characters have little in common beyond this. This therefore brings us to the unavoidable conclusion that any influence the work had on Fitzgerald must be limited.

## 3. Two Jay Gatsbys and Two Daisys

### 3.1. Creating *The Great Gatsby*

While Jay Gatsby has little in common with the character of Trimalchio, the work of *The Great Gatsby* is similar to its galley proof, *Trimalchio*, and this gives rise to interesting discussion. It is now possible to read not

only the galleys themselves, but also the associated facsimiles and texts. The final text of *Gatsby* passed through several stages before being published, including manuscripts, typescript, and galley proofs. In April 1924, Fitzgerald wrote to Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner’s, regarding the concept of the new novel (Fitzgerald and Perkins 69-70). By the summer of the same year, Fitzgerald had completed the first draft and, having revised it, he sent the typescript—entitled *The Great Gatsby*—to Scribner’s on October 27. Even after the galleys were released, he continued to revise them. The next year, on April 10 1925, *Gatsby* came out in print, having undergone the following process: (1) handwritten manuscript, (2) typescript, (3) galley proofs, and (4) first print edition. In addition, the Cambridge edition edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli, one of the authoritative texts, was published in 1991.

Not all the prototypes of *Gatsby* still exist. Firstly, the manuscript is now readable in facsimile—*The Great Gatsby: A Facsimile of the Manuscript*, edited by Bruccoli. Secondly, the typescript is defunct. Thirdly, the galleys are generally called “Trimalchio” and consist of two versions, both of which still exist: (1) the unrevised galley proofs (clean proofs) and (2) the revised galleys with handwritten modifications by Fitzgerald himself. The former galleys are currently held at University of South Carolina. They surfaced at an auction in New York on May 18 1971; however, their provenance prior to this is unknown (*GG* xxxi, 43n). Moreover, it is possible to read the facsimile of the galleys edited by Bruccoli, *Trimalchio: A Facsimile Edition of the Original Galley Proofs for The Great Gatsby*, as well as the text edited and partially modified by James L. W. West III, *Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby*. The latter galleys are held at Princeton University, which can be seen through *The Great Gatsby: The Revised and Rewritten Galleys* edited by Bruccoli. The revised galleys are particularly useful in that one can observe the very passages that were revised by Fitzgerald himself. In addition, it is fortunate these can be read online freely via the Princeton University Digital Library.<sup>7</sup>

When it comes to studying *Gatsby*, then, is *Ur-Gatsby* less important? According to Scott Heller, West III says that “[t]he old thinking was that all the earlier versions were the dross from which the golden icon was created, and all we should read is the iconic text” (Heller A23); therefore there may have been people who adhered to “the old thinking.” Curiosity surrounding *Trimalchio* has increased, however, and today Fitzgerald scholars—including West—take notice not only of “the golden icon” itself but also of “the dross” that led to its creation.

Comparative studies of *Gatsby* and *Ur-Gatsby* have been made on several occasions: Henry Dan Piper explains the composition process, based on differences (137-54); Robert E. Long examines the manuscripts (204); Kenneth E. Eble explores the revision process and its effects on *Gatsby* (“The Craft” 315-26); and Budd Schulberg claims that the value of *Gatsby* increased as a result of the revisions (14).<sup>8</sup> With regard to recent research, remarkably instructive are Bruccoli’s *Apparatus for F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby: Under the Red, White, and Blue* and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby: A Literary Reference* (71-76). Comparing *Gatsby* with its manuscripts and galleys enables researchers to clarify the differences, modifications, and the process of revisions. In addition, West’s “The Composition and Publication of *The Great Gatsby*” is also noteworthy.

Much discussion has already focused on *Gatsby* and *Ur-Gatsby*. While indebted to these previous studies, this paper turns its attention to the effects of the revisions on the characters, and indeed on the whole work—areas that few studies have attempted to explore thus far.

### 3.2. *The Great Gatsby* and *Trimalchio*

*Trimalchio*, edited by James L. W. West III, is a prototype of *The Great Gatsby*, and its plot is remarkably similar to that of *Gatsby*. West states that “[r]eading F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Trimalchio*, an early and complete version of *The Great Gatsby*, is like listening to a well-known musical composition, but played in a different key and with an alternate bridge passage” (Fitzgerald, *Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby* xiii; hereafter simply *TR*). In fact, “[Fitzgerald] rewrote Chapters VI and VII entirely and moved much material about Gatsby’s past to earlier positions in the novel” (West III, “Almost a Masterpiece” 17). In *Trimalchio*, Gatsby’s past is revealed near the end, while in *Gatsby*, it is disclosed little by little as the narrative unfolds. The revisions regarding his past were made in accordance with the advice of Perkins. On this change, Jackson R. Bryer points out that “[a]s a consequence, the revelations about his past, late in the novel, come as less of a surprise” (22); therefore, the revision reduces the mystery surrounding Gatsby’s image. It is true that *Trimalchio* is similar to *Gatsby*, but they are not the same. Hence, it is crucial to pay attention to the changed parts in order to better understand the final masterpiece.

One of the most important themes of *The Great Gatsby* is the idea that no matter how hard a poor man tries his dreams still cannot be realized. This reflects Fitzgerald’s own experience. In his memoir, *Ledger*, he writes that “[p]oor boys shouldn’t think of marrying rich girls” (Fitzgerald, *Ledger* 170). Furthermore, as Turnbull points out in his biography, Fitzgerald told a friend that “[t]he whole idea of *Gatsby* is the unfairness of a poor young man not being able to marry a girl with money. This theme comes up again and again because I lived it” (150). Furthermore, he wrote the following advice in a letter to his sister: “[r]emember in all society nine girls out of ten marry for money and nine men out of ten are fools” (Fitzgerald, *Life* 8). The idea that poverty and marriage are not compatible is thus one of the most important themes underpinning Fitzgerald’s work, and there is no doubt that *The Great Gatsby* is his best work based on this theme.

Fitzgerald made certain improvements to *Trimalchio* in order to more effectively portray this theme, thus enacting changes that would make *The Great Gatsby* great. This paper therefore compares *The Great Gatsby* with *Trimalchio*, examining the different revisions in detail. Unless specifically noted, what is henceforth discussed in relation to *Gatsby* also holds true for *Trimalchio*, and vice versa.

### 3.3. Daisy Metamorphosed

One of dramatic changes from *Trimalchio* to *Gatsby* is that of Daisy’s feelings for Gatsby after her marriage to Tom. From her behaviors in Chapters 6 and 7, it appears in *Trimalchio* that Daisy will leave Tom and

return to *Gatsby*. In Chapter 6, the Buchanans attend Gatsby's party for the first time and there are four scenes worth mentioning: (1) the dance between Gatsby and Daisy, (2) their secret meeting at Nick's house, (3) the conversation between Daisy and Nick, and (4) the end of the party.

First, Gatsby foxtrots with Daisy. Nick, observing the scene, imagines that "perhaps they were thinking of some other summer night when they had danced together back in the old, sad, poignant days of the war" (*TR* 83). In this version, the relationship between them gradually comes to the fore during the party.

Second, following the dance, they spend time alone together at Nick's house while Tom stays at the party. In comparison to *Gatsby*, Daisy seems to make more positive efforts to have the clandestine date with Gatsby in *Trimalchio*, and the time they spent together is longer in *Trimalchio*.

Third, they rejoin the buzz of the party. In *Trimalchio*, Daisy begins to dance, and has a conversation with Nick:

"Do you think I'm making a mistake?" asked Daisy, leaning back and looking up into my face.

"I don't understand."

"Well, I'm going to leave Tom."

I was illogically startled.

"Do you mean immediately?"

"No. When I'm ready. When it can be arranged." Her eyes were sincere, her voice was full and sad.

"Have you told Tom?"

"No, not yet. I'm not going to do anything for a month or two. Then I'll decide."

"I thought you'd decided."

"Yes, but—then I'll decide the details and all that." She laughed. "You know if you've never gone through a thing like this it's not so easy. In fact—I want to just go, and not tell Tom anything. . . ."

"He [Gatsby]'s wonderful," she said confidently. (*TR* 84-85)

It is worth noting that in *Trimalchio*, Daisy says to Nick, "I'm going to leave Tom," "I want to just go," and "He's wonderful" with a degree of admiration.

Finally, in *Trimalchio*, Daisy's feelings are described not long before she leaves the party with Tom: "[a]s the car moved off a flush of apprehension made her stretch out her hand, trying to touch his once more" (*TR* 87). Although she is married, she seems to be drawn towards Gatsby again following their reunion, and starts a new life with him after divorcing Tom.

In Chapter 7, her positive attitude towards him is again revealed. Gatsby discharges (almost) all his men, and cancels a party, having understood her intentions. Worried about the change, Nick tries to deduce Gatsby's real motive. In *Gatsby*, Gatsby briefly gives Nick the reason over the phone, while in *Trimalchio*, Gatsby visits



Nick in person and explains himself in more detail. Moreover, Daisy's feelings are revealed through Gatsby in *Trimalchio*:

"I'm very sad, old sport." He hesitated. "Daisy wants us to run off together. She came over this afternoon with a suitcase all packed and ready in the car." Gatsby shook his head wearily. "I tried to explain to her that we couldn't do that, and I only made her cry." (*TR* 89)

Since Daisy visits him "with a suitcase," it appears that she is about to leave Tom of her own accord and start a new life with Gatsby.

The fact that Gatsby's revelations about Daisy are deleted from the final version of *The Great Gatsby* casts doubt on whether or not Daisy is willing to start her life again with Gatsby.

### 3.4. Gatsby Made Stoic

#### 3.4.1. A Request

In *Trimalchio* Daisy seems to try to maintain a close relationship with Gatsby—but what about Jay Gatsby? He asks one thing of her: that she leaves Tom after telling him that she does not love him. In *Gatsby*, the scene plays out as follows:

He wanted nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say: "I never loved you." After she had obliterated three years with that sentence they could decide upon the more practical measures to be taken. One of them was that, after she was free, they were to go back to Louisville and be married from her house—just as if it were five years ago. (*GG* 85-86)

In *Trimalchio*, Gatsby tells Nick as follows:

"She can go to her husband and tell him that she never loved him. She can set that much right. Then we can go back to Louisville and be married in her house and start life over." (*TR* 90)

The request itself is not different; however, in *Trimalchio*, Gatsby himself confesses his feelings to Nick, while in *Gatsby*, Nick guesses how he is feeling.

#### 3.4.2. An "Affaire de Cœur"

Although his request itself does not change, Gatsby's feelings for Daisy in *Trimalchio* are different from those in *Gatsby*. His feelings for her are more complicated in *Trimalchio*: the Gatsby of *Trimalchio* seems to re-

gard their relationship as adulterous. This is suggested by his own remarks in Chapter 4 when he drives to central New York with Nick:

"I've got a favor to ask you, old sport," he said, "and I want to inquire one thing before I begin."

"All right."

"Have you ever had what's known as an affaire de cœur?"

"Why—never a very serious one."

"Never?" he insisted.

"Never." (*TR* 53-54)

Gatsby deliberately refers to an "affaire de cœur" in the car, before asking Nick to help him with his reunion with Daisy. The remark implies that Gatsby himself thinks that their relationship would be an "affaire de cœur." It also means that he has accepted her marriage with Tom, and is effectively stealing her from her husband. In Gatsby, however, this suggestive remark is deleted.

### 3.4.3. Resignation and Hatred

#### 3.4.3.1. "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz" and "Winter Dreams"

Another reason why Gatsby's feelings for Daisy in *Trimalchio* are complicated is that Gatsby is overcome with resignation and hatred. In several short stories written prior to *Gatsby*, as well as in *Trimalchio*, the following storyline recurs: (1) a couple have to separate because the hero is poor and cannot support his girlfriend; (2) he accepts this fact and gives her up; (3) they seem to be becoming a couple again and are on the brink of reuniting; (4) ultimately, however, the hero cannot fully grasp this possibility, and he will let her go, overcome with love and hate. Such a breakup plot can be seen in two short stories: "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz" (1922) and "Winter Dreams" (1922).

The theme of resignation can be found in "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz." John T. Unger learns that he has to end his relationship with girlfriend Kismine, due to their different social classes:

"Sometimes I think we'll never marry," he said sadly. "You're too wealthy, too magnificent. No one as rich as you are can be like other girls. I should marry the daughter of some well-to-do wholesale hardware man from Omaha or Sioux City, and be content with her half-million." (Fitzgerald, "Diamond" 153)

Here it is clear that, once Unger feels that he cannot win Kismine's love, he realizes that because she is "wealthy" he has to give up on her, and that "[he]'ll never marry" her.

In "Winter Dreams" both resignation and hatred are evident in the male protagonist. Dexter Green falls in

love with Judy Jones at first sight, and strives to win her favor; however, in a typical depiction of the flapper girl, she cannot select one man nor become a wife who stays at home, support her husband from behind the scenes. Having been made a fool of by Judy, and observing her freewheeling attitude to relationships, Dexter “responded often with bitterness and narrowed eyes” (Fitzgerald, “Winter Dreams” 57), emphasizing his mixed feelings for her. He struggles to win her love, but finally comes to think of their relationship as follows:

When autumn had come and gone again it occurred to him that he could not have Judy Jones. He had to beat this into his mind but he convinced himself at last. (“Winter Dreams” *Men* 57)

Realizing that he can “not have Judy Jones,” Dexter becomes engaged to another woman, Irene Scheerer. While Judy continues entertaining relationships with other men, Dexter tries to forget her:

He was not jealous when he saw that there was a new man to-night. He had been hardened against jealousy long before. (“Winter Dreams” 57)

He cannot keep her on his side, and is “hardened against” her. At last he “definitely give[s] her up” (“Winter Dreams” 58).

Dexter comes to hate Judy: when they meet again, and Judy presses Dexter to come back to her, he reacts as follows:

“I wish we could be like that again,” she said, and he forced himself to answer:

“I don’t think we can.” (“Winter Dreams” 61)

It appears that he will desert her, refusing her offer of reconciliation: he cannot accept her without reservation.

In “Winter Dreams,” the hero also becomes resigned to his fate. Accepting Judy’s advances, he breaks off his engagement with Irene. The pair thus recommences their relationship, only for it to collapse again:

Nor, when he had seen that it was no use, that he did not possess in himself the power to move fundamentally or to hold Judy Jones, did he bear any malice toward her. (“Winter Dreams” 62)

Dexter, emotionally damaged by Judy’s free spirit, cannot accept her way of life. He thus realizes why he cannot live with her, and cannot marry her after all.

### 3.4.3.2. *Trimalchio*

Both resignation and hatred can be found in *Trimalchio*. Daisy gets married to Tom, confirming the fact that she and Gatsby have broken up. Gatsby explains to Nick how he felt when he lost her:

"It was almost a year before I managed to beat it into my head that I couldn't have her," went on Gatsby quietly, "but I convinced myself at last. I used to be glad that I wasn't in society, old sport, because I never ran into any one who knew her or was liable to mention her name." (TR 123)

Like Dexter Green, Gatsby of *Trimalchio* has already accepted the truth of having lost his lover. Thinking back to this sad period, "he sat down suddenly and put his face in his hands and began to sob" (TR 90). As discussed before, Daisy approaches him again following their reunion in *Trimalchio*. Though he desires Daisy, he cannot accept her without reservation. This is due to his mixed feelings, including a degree of hatred towards her.

Nick reproaches Gatsby for his unrealistic request, and Gatsby reacts accordingly. In *Gatsby* this occurs in Chapter 6, while in *Trimalchio* their conversation takes place just before they visit Tom in Chapter 7:

"Take what you can get, Gatsby," I urged him. "Daisy's a person—she's not just a figure in your dream. And she probably doesn't feel that she owes you anything at all."

"She does, though. Why—I'm only thirty-two. I might be a great man if I could forget that once I lost Daisy. But my career has got to be like this. . . . It's got to keep going up. I used to think wonderful things were going to happen to me, before I met her. And I knew it was a great mistake for a man like me to fall in love. . . ." (TR 90)

Although he has great ambition and wants to move up in life, Gatsby seems to think that Daisy has made his life chaotic and that everything is her fault: "[s]he even wants to leave that. . . . I've gotten these things for her, and now she wants to run away" (TR 90). Therefore, he seems to think that eloping with her would render his considerable effort useless. Additionally, Nick feels that Gatsby wants her to "make a sort of atonement" for having abandoned him:

[Gatsby] seemed to feel that Daisy should make some sort of atonement that would give her love the value that it had before. . . . And first Daisy must purify herself by a renunciation of the years between. (TR 90)

The Gatsby of *Trimalchio* cannot accept his former lover unconditionally when she approaches him again, and he acts as though she were responsible for his confused state. This explains why he wants her to admit that she owes him something and to make amends for her wrongdoings. Therefore, in *Trimalchio*, Gatsby wants

Daisy to tell her husband that she does not love him, and this desire is rooted in his deep hatred for Daisy, and the need to put things right in his confused life.

#### 3.4.3.3. *The Great Gatsby*

On the one hand, in *Trimalchio*, Gatsby wants not only Daisy herself, but also her “atonement.” It could thus be said that he harbors feelings of both love and hate towards her. On the other hand, in *Gatsby*, this hatred for her is eclipsed by strong desire. The Jay Gatsby in *Gatsby* cannot accept the truth that Daisy is married to Tom, and simply tries to return to the past.

In *Gatsby*, references to the protagonist’s feelings for Daisy can be found in Chapters 6 and 7. In Chapter 6, after Daisy leaves one of Gatsby’s parties (having attended for the first time), Gatsby and Nick are left alone. Nick reproaches Gatsby for his action, which seems detached from reality, and Gatsby reacts as follows:

“I wouldn’t ask too much of her,” I ventured. “You can’t repeat the past.”

“Can’t repeat the past?” he cried incredulously. “Why of course you can!”

He looked around him wildly, as if the past were lurking here in the shadow of his house, just out of reach of his hand.

“I’m going to fix everything just the way it was before,” he said, nodding determinedly. “She’ll see.” (*GG* 86)

This phrase, arguably one of the novel’s most famous—“Can’t repeat the past? . . . Why of course you can!”—does not appear in *Trimalchio*. In *Gatsby*, the protagonist displays a strong will to recommence his relationship with Daisy and set up a life with her again. He tries to turn the clock back, obsessively devoting himself to repeating the past. Recognizing this strong will, Nick reflects on Gatsby’s desires:

. . . I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy. His life had been confused and disordered since then, but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it all slowly, he could find out what that thing was. . . . (*GG* 86)

Although Gatsby’s life is confused, in *Gatsby* he retains his strong desires to be with Daisy: he can never accept the truth that she married Tom after leaving him, and struggles to win back her love.

In Chapter 7 of *Gatsby*, following his fight with Tom at the Plaza Hotel, Gatsby’s defeat becomes decisive. Nevertheless, he does not doubt the fact that she loves him:

“I don’t think she ever loved him.” Gatsby turned around from a window and looked at me challengingly.

"You must remember, old sport, she was very excited this afternoon. He told her those things in a way that frighten her—that made it look as if I was some kind of cheap sharper. And the result was she hardly knew what she was saying."

He sat down gloomily.

"Of course she might have loved him, just for a minute, when they were first married—and loved me more even then, do you see?"

Suddenly he came out with a curious remark:

"In any case," he said, "it was just personal."

What could you make of that, except to suspect some intensity in his conception of the affair that couldn't be measured? (*GG* 118-119)

Gatsby believes that Daisy has never loved Tom, or that she loved him only for a short time just after their wedding; he has no doubt that she loves him more than her husband.

To summarize, in *Trimalchio* and in two Fitzgerald short stories related to *Gatsby*, the heroes have mixed feelings towards their lost love; meanwhile in *Gatsby*, these mixed feelings are absent, and the character does not necessarily seek his lover's atonement. Instead, he never accepts the fact of having lost her, merely clinging on to the past and devoting himself entirely to the act of getting her back.

#### 3.4.4. Emotional Men

Some of Gatsby's behaviors towards Daisy in *Trimalchio* reflect his complicated feelings. On the one hand, in *Gatsby*, his attitude towards her is fairly simple, or indeed stoic: he does not complain to her directly. On the other hand, in *Trimalchio*, he often expresses his dissatisfaction directly to Daisy. The protagonists of some Fitzgerald short stories written prior to *Gatsby*, such as "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz" and "The Sensible Thing," complain to their respective girlfriends, unable to control their feelings for them. John T. Unger of "Diamond" vents his anger when he learns that he is to be killed by his lover's father, and demands to know the truth.

"Oh, you did, did you?" John's voice trembled with anger. "I've heard about enough of this. If you haven't any more pride and decency than to have an affair with a fellow that you know isn't much better than a corpse, I don't want to have any more to do with you!"

"You're not a corpse!" she protested in horror. "You're not a corpse! I won't have you saying that I kissed a corpse!"

"I said nothing of the sort!"

"You did! You said I kissed a corpse!"

“I didn’t!” (“Diamond” 155)

Equally, George O’Kelly, the protagonist of “The Sensible Thing,” also becomes angry at a situation that appears unlikely to turn out according to his wishes, and suspects that his lover, Jonquil, has another boyfriend.

He made wild accusations—there was someone else—she was keeping something from him! (“Thing” 157)

The situation is not satisfactory, leading him to shameful behavior in her presence.

George didn’t take the situation well, at all. He seized her in his arms and tried literally to kiss her into marrying him at once. When this failed, he broke into a long monologue of self-pity and ceased only when he saw that he was making himself despicable in her sight. He threatened to leave when he had no intention of leaving, and refused to go when she told him that, after all, it was best that he should. (“Thing” 157-58)

In both *The Great Gatsby* and *Trimalchio*, Jay Gatsby does not criticize Daisy as bitterly as Unger or O’Kelly, yet the Gatsby in *Trimalchio* does display dissatisfaction towards her in Chapters 4 and 7. At Gatsby’s second party in Chapter 4, a celebrity who likes Daisy’s hairstyle asks him to acquire the address of her hairdresser. Gatsby tries to take advantage of the opportunity to make Daisy famous, but she flatly refuses his proposal:

Gatsby, who had been talking to the moving picture celebrity, remarked suddenly that she had been very complimentary about Daisy. His voice was proud and pleased.

“And, here’s a chance to become famous—she wants to know where you got your hair cut.”

“You tell her I think she’s lovely too,” said Daisy pleasantly.

Gatsby took out a pencil and a notebook.

“Where do you get your hair cut? I promised her I’d ask you.”

“It’s a secret,” whispered Daisy. “It’s a man I discovered myself and I wouldn’t tell anybody for the world.”

“You don’t understand,” he said impressively. “She’ll probably have hers done the same way and you’ll be the originator of a new vogue all over the country.”

“No thanks,” said Daisy lightly. (TR 85)

Gatsby identifies his own world, and that of the actress, with Daisy’s, failing to recognize the difference between them. He has a false idea of fame, and thus believes everyone else is as honored as him to attract people’s

attention. Daisy does not return his kindness, and he thus feels discouraged that he is unable to satisfy her. Sensitive to his feeling, Daisy decides to tell him the address:

With her little gold pencil she wrote an address on the tablecloth. "There's where I get my hair cut. Is that what she wanted to know?" . . . Gatsby took out his pencil and slowly obliterated her markings with his own. (TR 86)

Gatsby cannot accept Daisy's favor with genuine pleasure, and fails to tell the actress the address ; instead he "obliterated her markings with his own" out of spite, which highlights his disapproval.

In Chapter 7 of *Gatsby* and of *Trimalchio*, Gatsby attends Tom's lunch party with Nick. They quickly decide to go to New York, and the male trio waits outside for Daisy and Jordan. The scene is described in *Trimalchio* as follows:

"I'll get some whiskey," answered Tom. He went inside. Gatsby turned to me, his voice trembling.

"I can't stand this," he said, "it's agony. I wanted to put my arms around her at luncheon when he began that talk. She's got to tell him the truth."

"She loves you. Her voice is full of it."

"Her voice is full of money," he said suddenly. (TR 96)

In *Trimalchio*, Gatsby recognizes that the relationship with Daisy is adulterous, confessing to Nick after lunch that he "can't stand" the situation where he "want[s] to put [his] arms around her," but has to restrain himself in front of her husband. Furthermore, he is clearly frustrated and emotional with "his voice trembling." In addition, at lunch Gatsby does not think that Daisy will not tell Tom that she is leaving him. Such a result is so unexpected for him that he feels betrayed by her. West points out that "Gatsby is emotional in this version . . . and Gatsby is upset. . . . He even seems a little angry" (Bryer and VanArsdale 23). Hence, his statement that her "voice is full of money" suggests his disappointment, or indeed a hint of irony.

On the other hand, the situation is revised in *Gatsby* as follows:

"I'll get some whiskey," answered Tom. He went inside.

Gatsby turned to me rigidly:

"I can't say anything in his house, old sport."

"She's got an indiscreet voice," I remarked. "It's full of——"

I hesitated.

"Her voice is full of money," he said suddenly. (GG 93-94)



West notes that “[a]ll is changed by the revision. Gatsby is no longer emotionally overwrought; instead he is merely tense” (Bryer and VanArsdale 24). His emotions are more controlled in *Gatsby*: he simply says to Nick, “I can’t say anything in his house, old sport,” when Tom is absent. Additionally, his statement, “Her voice is full of money,” in *Gatsby* is only made in response to Nick, explaining what kind of woman she is. The remark of his in *Gatsby* is the same as that found in *Trimalchio*; however, where Gatsby is emotional in *Trimalchio*, he is calm in *Gatsby*. Hence, the same statement conveys “an entirely different feeling” (Bryer and VanArsdale 24).

Although not as emotional as Unger or O’Kelly, the figure of Gatsby in *Trimalchio* is a little more emotional about Daisy. On the other hand, the protagonist in *Gatsby* does not complain to Daisy directly. Furthermore, in *Gatsby*, Daisy does not seem to approach him; yet he is still overcome by desire for her. His affection for her in *Gatsby* is seemingly stronger than in *Trimalchio*, and moreover, his mixed feelings towards her are erased from the final narrative. One of the key differences, then, between *Gatsby* and *Trimalchio* is the presence—or indeed absence—of the protagonist’s mixed feelings.

#### 4. Conclusion

The discussion and analysis of this paper thus leads us to two answers in response to the questions posed in the introduction. First, it is suggested that the influence of “The Banquet of Trimalchio” on Fitzgerald is limited. Admittedly, Fitzgerald used the term “Trimalchio” in *The Great Gatsby*, and described Gatsby in a similar manner to Trimalchio. Indeed, when writing the novel, Fitzgerald obviously had this text in mind; however, Fitzgerald did not receive good grades in classics at school<sup>9</sup>, and most importantly, he did not want *Gatsby* to be a mere copy of a classic but “something new,” as he expressed to Maxwell Perkins before embarking on his third novel:

I want to write something new—something extraordinary and beautiful and simple + intricately patterned.  
(Fitzgerald, *Correspondence* 112)

Nick compares Gatsby to Trimalchio, but the eponymous protagonist is not merely a member of the nouveau riche. Furthermore, since he is not satirized, Gatsby remains a romantic hero rather than an object of ridicule.

Second, there are two major revisions in *Trimalchio*, which are instrumental in ensuring the success of *The Great Gatsby*: (1) Daisy’s affection for Gatsby after her marriage is omitted from the revision, thus making Daisy seem more ruthless in, and (2) Gatsby’s complicated feelings for Daisy are eliminated in the final version, thus making his intention to win Daisy back, and to start a life with her, even more conspicuous.

As a result of these two revisions, Jay Gatsby seems unhappier, having lost his girlfriend because of poverty, and tries so hard to regain her love that he cannot accept the reality: no matter how much he desires it, he cannot have her. To make matters worse, he saves her life, which comes at a heavy price, and the revised ver-

sion of *Trimalchio* makes his regret more bitter. The theme of a rich girl being forever inaccessible to the poor boy thus emerges most clearly in *Gatsby*. Fitzgerald’s revision of *Trimalchio* is ultimately essential in producing the factors that make *The Great Gatsby* great.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Paul L. MacKendrick points out that “the *Satyricon* was not included in the syllabus of the two courses in Latin that Fitzgerald took at Princeton” (307), and James L. W. West states that “[i]t is not certain when Fitzgerald read the *Satyricon*—perhaps while he was a student at Princeton, more likely after he had left the university and became a professional writer” (“Revelry” 16). It is more likely that Fitzgerald read it after graduation than at college. Furthermore, it may have been around 1922 when he read *Ulysses* (the Magazine edition had been published in 1918), a text in which Trimalchio is mentioned (Bernard R. Tanner 17). In addition, in the same year, his friend Thomas R. Smith (1880-1942) published an English edition of the *Satyricon*, translated by an Englishman named W. C. Firebaugh, who was charged with obscenity (Tate 87). Ward Briggs presumes that Smith gave it to him (“Petronius and Virgil” 229), but this is not based on factual evidence. As a result, no existing research provides sufficient evidence to determine when Fitzgerald came to know “Trimalchio,” and the question of when Fitzgerald himself read the *Satyricon* remains unanswered.
- <sup>2</sup> During the five months prior to publication, Fitzgerald had been making tremendous efforts to determine the title of the work that would later become *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald decided on this title just before the publication, but nevertheless tried to change it at the last moment. On March 7 1925, he contacted Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner’s, by wire to ask whether or not he could change the title “The Great Gatsby” to “Gold-Hatted Gatsby” or “Trimalchio.” On March 9, Perkins responded that “[t]itle change would cause bad delay and confusion,” indirectly refusing his author’s request. On March 19, one month before the publication, Fitzgerald (in Capri, Italy) again asked Perkins by wire to change the title to “Under the Red, White and Blue.” Unfortunately, his demand was rejected because it was too late (Brucoli, *Some Sort* 216). Therefore, the title of *The Great Gatsby* does not necessarily express the author’s intention; it could have been “Trimalchio.” In addition, Zelda Fitzgerald and Perkins preferred the title “The Great Gatsby,” and Fitzgerald respected their opinions. Ring Lardner considered “Trimalchio” difficult to pronounce (Brucoli, *Some Sort* 207). Ward Briggs offers more information regarding the changes to the title (Briggs, “Ur-*Gatsby*” 577-84). Besides “The Great Gatsby,” other titles considered by Fitzgerald were “Among Ash Heaps and Millionaires,” “Trimalchio,” “Trimalchio in West Egg,” “On the Road to West Egg,” “Gold-Hatted Gatsby,” “The High-Bouncing Lover,” and simply “Gatsby.” “Gold-Hatted Gatsby” and “The High-Bouncing Lover” are mentioned in the epigraph (Fitzgerald, *Life* 85, 95, 98; Brucoli, *Apparatus* 4n, 6).

- <sup>3</sup> The story of Trimalchio is narrated by Encolpius. The relation between the party-giver and the narrator reminds us of *Gatsby*: Trimalchio is to Encolpius what *Gatsby* is to Nick.
- <sup>4</sup> Trimalchio, as if he were Tom Buchanan, loves to be noticed, showing off his knowledge of astrology, mythology, history, philosophy, and literature—though this is in fact suspicious.
- <sup>5</sup> In the introduction to the Penguin edition of *Gatsby*, Tony Tanner points out that both *Gatsby* and Trimalchio are utterly obsessed with time (vii).
- <sup>6</sup> Keath Fraser also compares both works (57-70). In addition, with regard to the characters and their parties, Brian Way's interpretation is instructive (105-06).
- <sup>7</sup> The permanent link: [arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/9z903115m](https://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/9z903115m).
- <sup>8</sup> Fitzgerald was engaged in writing movie scenarios with Budd Schulberg during the Hollywood days. The character of Manley Halliday appears in Schulberg's *The Disenchanted* (1950), reminding us of Fitzgerald.
- <sup>9</sup> His grade for Cesar was "E"; Virgil was "D"; and Cicero was "C" (Eble, *Fitzgerald* 37).

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## 【Abstract】

F・スコット・フィッツジェラルドと  
「トリマルキオ」に関する2つの問題

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F・スコット・フィッツジェラルドは、『グレート・ギャツビー』の執筆時、確かに「トリマルキオの饗宴」について考えていた。本論はその「トリマルキオ」に関わる2つの問題を論ずることを意図している。ひとつ目の問題は、ジェイ・ギャツビーは「トリマルキオの饗宴」の成金と本当に似ているのか。もう一つは、『トリマルキオ』の改訂が『ギャツビー』にどれほどの影響をもたらしているのかである。これらの問題を解決するために、本論はジェイ・ギャツビーとトリマルキオの比較に加えて「トリマルキオの饗宴」のフィッツジェラルドに与えた影響を調べ、それから『トリマルキオ』の改訂がその登場人物にどのような変化をもたらし、かつ改訂された登場人物が作品の価値をどれほど高めているのかを明らかにする。

キーワード：F・スコット・フィッツジェラルド、『グレート・ギャツビー』、「トリマルキオ」、ジェイ・ギャツビー、デイズ・ブキャナン

When writing *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald certainly had “The Banquet of Trimalchio” in mind. This paper intends to discuss two questions raised by the connection to “Trimalchio.” First, to what extent does Jay Gatsby resemble the nouveau riche of “The Banquet of Trimalchio”? Second, to what extent does the revision of *Trimalchio* influence *Gatsby*? In order to answer these questions, this study examines the influence of “The Banquet of Trimalchio” on Fitzgerald, while also comparing Jay Gatsby with Trimalchio, before going on to show how the revision of *Trimalchio* affects the characters and how much the revised characters enhance the overall value of the work.

**Key words:** F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, “Trimalchio”, Jay Gatsby, and Daisy Buchanan

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